

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 14871

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SUBJECT: FRG PRESS COMMENTARY ON PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS CONCERNING CIA ACTIVITIES IN CHILE

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT FORD'S STATEMENTS AT SEPT. 16 PRESS CONFERENCE CONCERNING CIA ACTIVITIES IN CHILE EVOKED BROAD AND GENERALLY UNFAVORABLE COMMENT IN FRG DAILY PRESS. EDITORIALISTS WERE PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF JUSTIFYING INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS OF A WESTERN DEMOCRACY ON GROUNDS THAT COMMUNIST STATES INDULGE EVEN MORE IN SUCH ACTIVITIES. COMMENT REFLECTS AMAZEMENT AT PRESIDENT'S FRANKNESS AND, AT SAME TIME, THE BELIEF THAT SUCH CANDOR WILL EXACERBATE DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT RATHER THAN LAYING IT TO REST. END SUMMARY

1. FRANKFURTER ALLEGEMEINE ZEITUNG (FAZ) OF SEPTEMBER 18 CARRIES FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL CONCEDED THAT THE PRESIDENT IS OBJECTIVELY CORRECT IN WHAT HE SAID ABOUT INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS OF COMMUNIST STATES:

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"NATURALLY THE COMMUNIST STATES SPEND MORE ON 'OPERA-

TIONS' THAN WASHINGTON DOES; CERTAINLY THEY -- NARROW MINDED KNOW-IT-ALLS THAT THEY ARE WITH THEIR CLAIM TO SOLE POSSESSION OF MORALITY -- HAVE MANY FEWER SCRUPLES; AND A RESIGNED DEFENSELESSNESS DOES NOT SUPPORT THE GOOD. BUT THE FREE WORLD COULD NOT REMAIN AS FREE AS IT HAPPILY IS IF IT PERMITTED THE ENEMIES OF FREEDOM TO FORCE THEIR METHODS UPON IT. THE FREE WORLD'S SELF-CONFIDENCE COULD NOT BEAR THAT, AND IT HAS OTHER, MORE OPEN, METHODS OF STRUGGLE AT ITS DISPOSAL."

THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG CALLS THE REFERENCE TO COMMUNIST INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS A "MACHIAVELLIAN PIECE OF CYNICISM," STATING THAT THE PRESIDENT "MADE NOT THE SLIGHTEST ATTEMPT TO DIFFERENTIATE US POLICY FROM THAT OF MOSCOW." THE KOELNER ANZEIGER ARGUES THAT "NOBODY EXPECTS DEMOCRATIC STATES TO DEPRIVE THEIR INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES OF FUNDS. BUT IT IS DISTRESSING THAT THE LEADER OF THE GREATEST POWER IN THE WEST HARDLY DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN MOSCOW'S AND WASHINGTON'S TACTICS." NEUE RHEIN ZEITUNG OBSERVES THAT "LATELY THE IMAGE OF THE DEMOCRACIES' TRUSTWORTHINESS HAS BEEN RECEIVING BLOW AFTER BLOW THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THAT FORD SHOULD USE AS AN EXCUSE FOR THE CIA AFFAIR IN CHILE THE FACT THAT COMMUNIST STATES SPEND STILL MORE MONEY FOR SUCH PURPOSES SOMEHOW MAKES THE ACTION SEEM WORSE, NOT BETTER."

2. SOME COMMENTATORS ARE SKEPTICAL OF THE DISTINCTION THE PRESIDENT DREW BETWEEN US SUPPORT FOR THE OPPOSITION TO ALLENDE AND US NON-INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHILEAN COUP. NEUE RHEIN ZEITUNG, FOR EXAMPLE, SAYS THAT THE PRESIDENT "INSISTS THAT THERE WAS NO AMERICAN INTERVENTION TO OVERTHROW PRESIDENT ALLENDE. FORMALLY, THAT MAY BE TRUE. BUT WHO WILL DENY THAT MASSIVE SUPPORT FROM OUTSIDE ENCOURAGED ALL THOSE WITHIN CHILE WHO WERE HEADING NON-PARLIAMENTARY -- THAT IS, DEMOGOGIC -- ATTEMPTS TO GET RID OF ALLENDE?" FAZ (JAN REIFENBERG WRITING FROM WASHINGTON) SAYS THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S "REMARKS GAVE RISE TO CONSIDERABLE WONDERING, AS THERE WERE ABOUT TEN NEWSPAPERS, 24 RADIO STATIONS, AND ALL KINDS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

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IN CHILE WHEN ALLENDE WAS OUSTED, WHILE THE JUNTA UNDER PINOCHET HAS DISSOLVED PARLIAMENT AND TOLERATES ONLY PRO-GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPERS." THE SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG, IN A SEPTEMBER 19 EDITORIAL, EXPRESSES THE VIEW THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS "ONLY LIFTED A CORNER OF THE VEIL" AND THAT IN ANY CASE THE REVELATIONS ABOUT CHILE WILL HAVE CONSEQUENCES AROUND THE WORLD: "NOT ONLY INDIRA GHANDI, BUT OTHER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF

SMALL COUNTRIES, WILL SUSPECT THAT THE CIA IS BEHIND THEIR OPPONENTS -- TO THE DETRIMENT OF AMERICA'S CREDIBILITY."

3. EDITORIALISTS ALSO ATTACK WHAT THEY REGARD AS CLAIM OF A RIGHT ON THE PART OF THE US TO DETERMINE WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF OTHER PEOPLES.

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ACCORDING TO THE SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG, THIS REQUIRES A "GOODLY PORTION OF COLD CALCULATION AND IGNORANCE OF THE UN CHARTER. IN CLEAR TEXT IT MEANS: 'WE IN WASHINGTON DETERMINE WHICH PRESIDENT SERVES A PEOPLE AND WHICH ONE DOES NOT. OUR OWN INTERESTS PROVIDE THE MEASURE,'" THE KOELNER STADT-ANZIGER STATES THAT "THE QUESTION AS TO WHAT INTERNATIONAL LAW SUPPORTS SUCH US ACTIONS IS EASY TO ANSWER. THERE IS NO SUCH LAW. ON THE CONTRARY, THIS CHILEAN AFFAIR IS A

CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE UN CHARTER."

4. RHEINISCHE POST (RP) IS ONE OF THE FEW PAPERS WE HAVE SEEN THAT SEES SOME VIRTUE IN THE ATTEMPT TO KEEP OPPOSITION ALIVE IN CHILE BY EXTERNAL MEANS (SOME OTHERS, E.G. KOELNER STADT-ANZEIGER, CLAIM THAT IT "HAS NEVER BEEN PROVED" THAT ALLENDE TRIED TO SUPPRESS OPPOSITION PAPERS AND PARTIES). RP WRITES THAT "IT SEEMS DOWNRIGHT ADMIRABLE THAT AMERICA, AS FORD SEES UNCLASSIFIED

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IT, SOUGHT IN A DICTATORIALLY RULED LAND TO SUPPORT THOSE NEWSPAPERS THAT WERE NOT GOVERNMENT MOUTHPIECES. AND THAT ONE DOES NOT EXTEND CREDITS TO A COUNTRY THAT HAS EXPROPRIATED HOLDINGS THERE OF US NATIONALS -- THIS TOO IS UNDERSTANDABLE.....BUT IT WOULD BE A SIN OF OMISSION IF FORD WERE TO UNDERESTIMATE THE WIDE-RANGING RIPPLES FROM THE STONE HE HAS HEAVED INTO THE WATER..."

5. THE EDITORIAL IN FAZ CONTAINS WHAT IS PERHAPS THE STRONGEST STATEMENT WE HAVE SEEN THAT CANDOR ON THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT IS NOT LIKELY TO SETTLE THE ISSUES RAISED. "IT WOULD BE SURPRISING," THE PAPER WRITES, "IF GERALD FORD DID NOT HAVE TO DISCOVER THAT NEITHER HIS OPPONENTS NOR THAT PART OF THE PUBLIC WELL DISPOSED TOWARD HIM WILL BE DISARMED BY THIS CHARMING FRANKNESS OR WILL PERMIT THIS JUICY BONE TO ESCAPE THEM. ON THE CONTRARY, ONE HAS TO ASSUME THAT THINGS ARE JUST GETTING GOING. TO BE SURE, IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW HE COULD HAVE AVOIDED THIS RESULT WITHOUT CHOOSING -- IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FIRM TRADITION OF HIGHLY PLACED PERSONS -- TO REJECT DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT ALTOGETHER. BUT THE ASTONISHING NAIVETE WITH WHICH PRESIDENT FORD PRESENTED HIS PHILOSOPHY OF INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS WILL SURELY NOT HAVE A SOOTHING BUT, RATHER, A PROVOCATIVE EFFECT -- WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, SEEMS TO PROVE THAT IT WAS QUITE SIMPLY GENUINE AND NOT A KIND OF REFINED CAMOUFLAGE." HILLENBRAND

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